and another an old electric light bulb suspended from the ceiling by a string. 265 [351]

The maintenance of a shebeen can be a fairly lucrative business, for it plays an important part in the social life of the lower classes. In the absence of any other entertainment, there is almost always a large number of persons in the shebeens, merchants, workmen, soldiers and policemen off duty, and loafers. The shebeen, however, is definitely limited to the lower orders of society. One of the higher ranking officials, for example, the prisoners or the judge, would never be seen in such a place, nor would the army officers. The dividing line is to be found in the members, who sometimes visit in pairs or groups, but prefer the term "club" because it has none of the stigma attached to the tea-shop. The landed aristocrats, the chieftains, are not bound by the scruples of officials or officers, but tend to avoid the places. The reason is clear and explicit. A man of the higher echelons of society is expected to maintain a diwankhana or guest-room in his home where he can entertain, and to be entertained in the houses of his friends, rather than purchase his refreshment in common with others. Similarly, a man of some standing in the community who spends much of his time in shebeens will quickly acquire the reputation of a loafer. Finally, as enlisted men from the army are to be found there on Fridays, there is talk that these places harbor homosexuals (hotly hen, "homosexual," is a formidable term of abuse, an epithet which elicits violence.)

265 554 [577]

[574]

[558]

[70] [578] [538]

872
873
895
941
872
521
873
895
873
941
873

ettend school, but some have yet sought any other career than that of the housewife. For the youths, failure in school is a personal and domestic tragedy of great moment, because it precludes a career in the government or the army, and they are often severely castigated by their disappointed fathers. At the same time, politics, the primary conversational topic of the townsmen, becomes an extravagant interest of the young men, and such matters are discussed endlessly. Homosexuality, or, at least, a very intimate masculine friendship, can be a temporary feature of this period, usually ended by marriage. It must be confessed that many of the young men of the town spend much of their time unemployed, lounging in the <u>shebbeens</u> or tea-shops where, through enlisted personnel of the army or certain regiments, they can be exposed to influences of this type.[1] A person listened to an elder brother berating one of his juniors for spending too much time in the tea-shops, a situation of some concern to the family. Adolescence can thus be a time of great stress for many of the youths of the town, and distraught young men form a type frequently encountered.

---

[1]One was consulted by many of the townspeople for medicine or advice. One youth of the lower classes complained of "weakness," and sought some sort of remedy. On being questioned, he confessed that he seldom ever obtained fellatio, but this, prohibited by both religious and civil law, appeared to be a rare and isolated example. It does, however, illustrate the extremes which stringency in premarital sexual relations can create.

185 houses

hours were spent at his favourite tea house or in the streets. The division applied also to the adolescent sons, who in their leisure hours were sent out from the homes to obtain a "street education" (see p. 114, 115). Only small boys of from 3 to 4 years of age still belonged to the home, that is to say, the women's world. For an outsider it seemed that this separation of the two sexes during the day caused the men to inhabit a world utterly devoid of women. From the houses, hostels, or tea houses men saw only anonymous, concealed figures behind gates. No woman's face or form was visible. When Gavagai[1] says that in Oriental areas a man outside his home must the persons—other men—who constitute his spiritual consort, he is quite right as regards conditions in a Kurdish town like Sulaimani. However, this can be extended to mean that the men also seem to other men persons who come to mean something for him in other ways. The social conventions of Kurdish men evinced at times a homosexual tinge; they could be seen walking together with arms round waists, holding hands and interlacing fingers.

Within the home there seemed to be remarkably little room for him. A peg or nail on the wall for his clothes, a place on the floor by the most cosy, a mattress or iron bedstead wherever he had decided to sleep—that was all. Man's position in the home was clearly demonstrated one evening in my interpreter's home. A women's party was in progress when the master of the house and his 2½ year old son returned at about 10 p.m. In the courtyard, some twenty-five women were seated on chairs, mattresses and cheesy sofas, their black, over-garments and veils hanging on pegs in the hall. Most of the women present were not allowed to be seen by the two men. It was technically impossible for so many women to mask simultaneously to obtain their shift and veils, and they therefore decided by their behaviour to create an intangible, but impenetrable, barrier between the two sexes. The men acted as though they were invisible, and the women pretended that they had not observed anyone entering the only entrance to the house. Slipping behind the row of seated women, the men disappeared into the rooms to change into their home and sleeping dress—a long striped shirt over wide pants for the older men and pyjamas for the younger. Re-appearing, they once more slyly past the seated women, and made their way to the corner of the courtyard where the ladder to the roof was leaning. Up this they vanished into the gloom. Neither the women nor the men exchanged the customary salutation. On this special occasion neither side was able to notice the presence of the other. There was nothing for the men to do but disappear from view, and as the women were occupying the area of the whole house, this meant going to bed on the roof.

The way this home was arranged, very few square metres seemed to be left at the disposal of the husband and the grown-up son. Of course, in this case it was the common home of two wives. However, there was very little more room for the man who had his two wives installed in separate, well known as Kirkuk. I had no opportunity to discover how the guest room, which was the one room common to both houses, functioned if the husband had male guests. To judge by similar cases in my interpreter's home it can be assumed that the women prepared refreshments, but kept to themselves in another room, cut off from the guest room by a passage that led from the street to the courtyard, or ruined to the courtyard itself and the small rooms surrounding it. However, the guest room was not the husband's living room in the ordinary way. The two apartments together formed a house possessing two entrances from the street, but were inside unconnected. Each was a woman's home where the husband